

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 ISO-00 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15
CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 DODE-00 EB-08 SMS-01 SAA-01
SES-01 IO-14 ACDA-12 TRSE-00 OMB-01 /097 W
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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5530
INFO AMEMBASSY SEOUL

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 CAIRO 24005

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDIP KS EG
SUBJECT: EGYPTIAN/ROK RELATIONS

REF: (A) CAIRO 23838, (B) SEOUL 9679, (C) CAIRO 12925

SUMMARY: ROK CONGEN HAHM CHARGES THAT HASSAN TUHAMY IS PRINCIPAL OBSTACLE TO ESTABLISHMENT GOE/ROK DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS AND ASKS MY HELP. HAHM ALSO INDICATES THAT HE DISCUSSED SUBJECT SOME TIME AGO WITH LTG KAMAL HASSAN ALI, WHEN LATTER WAS HEAD OF GI, AND WAS QUERIED ABOUT POSSIBLE ROK WILLINGNESS PROVIDE MILITARY ASSISTANCE. HAHM CLAIMS HE PARRIED THIS BY INDICATING USG CONCURRENCE REQUIRED FOR ANY SOUTH KOREAN MILITARY SALES TO EGYPT. HAHM RELATES THAT EGYPTIAN MINHOUSING/RECONSTRUCTION KAFRAWI WILL GO TO SEOUL NOVEMBER 20 IN ORDER DISCUSS POSSIBILITY OF ROK PROVIDING ASSISTANCE FOR ONE MILLION TON CEMENT PLANT FOR EGYPT. SOME DIFFERENCE OF VIEW CURRENTLY EXISTS AS TO APPROPRIATE INTEREST RATE TO BE CHARGED, BUT THIS SHOULD HOPEFULLY BE RESOLVABLE. GROUP OF DISTINGUISHED SOUTH KOREAN SCHOLARS WILL VISIT EGYPT END OF NOVEMBER FOR SYMPOSIUM ON KOREAN PENINSULA. HAHM PERSONALLY FEELS FRUSTRATED AT SLOW PACE OF PROGRESS. I ASSURED HIM THAT I WILL CONTINUE TRY TO BE
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HELPFUL. END SUMMARY.

1. ROK CONGEN, AMBASSADOR HAHM, BRIEFED ME LAST EVENING ON CURRENT STATE OF PLAY ON EGYPTIAN/ROK RELATIONS.
2. HAHM, TOO, CLAIMED THAT HASSAN TUHAMY, WHOM HE DESCRIBED AS IN CHARGE OF KOREAN AFFAIRS IN PRESIDENCY,

IS THE PRINCIPAL OBSTACLE TO THE EARLY ESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN EGYPT AND ROK. HE WAS SOMEWHAT VAGUE ON WHETHER HE PERSONALLY HAD TALKED TO TUHAMY OR WHETHER HE HAD HEARD THIS CHARGE FROM MFA FAR EASTERN DIRECTOR SHARAF. HE ASKED IF I WOULD BE WILLING TO SPEAK TO TUHAMY ON THE SUBJECT. I TOLD HAHM THAT I WOULD BE HAPPY TO DO SO, BUT NOTED MY VIEW THAT TUHAMY IS NOT THE ONLY OBSTACLE. THERE IS A STRONG BELIEF IN SENIOR GOE CIRCLES, ESPECIALLY MILITARY, THAT ESTABLISHING DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH ROK MIGHT OFFEND DPRK AND CUT OFF MILITARY SPARE PARTS FLOW FROM THAT SOURCE. I HAD FOUND THIS TO BE AN OVERWHELMING PREOCCUPATION WITH THE EGYPTIANS IN MY YEARS HERE WHENEVER THE DPRK IS DISCUSSED.

3. HAHM THEN SAID HE HAD SOME TIME AGO DISCUSSED SUBJECT WITH LTG KAMAL HASSAN ALI AND SOUGHT LATTER'S ASSISTANCE. HASSAN ALI WAS AT THE TIME DIRECTOR OF GI. HASSAN ALI'S IMMEDIATE QUESTION WAS WHETHER ROK COULD PROVIDE GOE WITH MILITARY EQUIPMENT IN THE EVENT DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WERE ESTABLISHED. THE GENERAL HAD SPECIFICALLY ASKED ABOUT MISSILES. HAHM CLAIMS THAT HE TOLD HASSAN ALI THAT TRANSFER OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT WOULD ONLY BE POSSIBLE WITH EXPRESS USG CONCURRENCE. HAHM HAD ACKNOWLEDGED TO HASSAN ALI THAT THERE ARE SOME SOUTH KOREAN MANUFACTURED MISSILES, BUT CLAIMS THAT HE SAID EVEN THESE WOULD NOT

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BE SOLD TO EGYPT WITHOUT FIRST OBTAINING U.S. APPROVAL. THUS, THE CONVERSATION HAD BEEN INCONCLUSIVE.

4. ON ECONOMIC SIDE, HAHM INDICATED THAT MINHOUSING/ RECONSTRUCTION HASSABALLAH EL KAFRAWI HAS BEEN INVITED TO VISIT ROK AND WILL DO SO BEGINNING NOVEMBER 20. PURPOSE IS TO DISCUSS POSSIBILITY OF ROK PROVIDING ASSISTANCE TO BUILD A ONE MILLION TON CEMENT PLANT FOR EGYPT. AT THE MOMENT, ACCORDING TO HAHM, THERE IS SOME DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HIMSELF AND KAFRAWI ON INTEREST RATE TO BE CHARGED FOR FINANCING. KAFRAWI INSISTS IT MUST BE NO MORE THAN 5 PERCENT. ROK WANTS 7 PERCENT AND NOTED THAT THIS IS CHEAPER THAN 11 PERCENT INTEREST RATES PREVAILING IN WEST EUROPE. HAHM IS HOPEFUL THAT THIS ASPECT MAY BE WORKED OUT. HE BELIEVES THAT AN ATTRACTIVE ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE PROJECT OF THIS SORT WILL HELP IN PERSUADING EGYPTIANS TO BITE THE BULLET ON DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH ROK IN FACE OF ANTICIPATED DPRK OBJECTION.

5. HAHM HAS ALSO ARRANGED THAT GROUP OF THREE DISTINGUISHED SOUTH KOREAN SCHOLARS VISIT EGYPT END OF NOVEMBER TO CONDUCT SYMPOSIUM ON THE KOREAN PENINSULA. HE ASKED IF

EMBASSY OFFICER COULD ATTEND. I AGREED.

6. FYI: HAHM ACKNOWLEDGED THAT HE IS FEELING FRUSTRATED AT SLOW PACE OF PROGRESS. APPARENTLY SHARAF HAD TOLD HIM IT WOULD BE DESIRABLE IF GOE/ROK DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS COULD BE ESTABLISHED PRIOR TO NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL. HAHM SAYS THAT HE HAS JUST WRITTEN HIS PRIMIN THAT IF RELATIONS ARE NOT ESTABLISHED BEFORE EGYPTIAN NORMALIZATION WITH ISRAEL, HE WILL RESIGN FROM FS. I SOUGHT TO BUCK HIM UP, NOTING THAT EGYPTIAN NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH GOE/ROK RELATIONS. DURING HIS TENURE GOE/ROK RELATIONS HAVE COME A LONG WAY AND HE DESERVED MUCH CREDIT

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 CAIRO 24005

FOR WHAT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED. AS HE SHOULD KNOW,
PATIENCE IS AN ESSENTIAL INGREDIENT IN WORKING IN THE EAST.
END FYI.

7. HAHM IS MEETING WITH MFA UNDERSEC SALAH HASSAN TODAY TO DISCUSS GOE/ROK RELATIONS AND WHAT MIGHT BE DONE TO ACCELERATE THE PACE. ASSURED HIM THAT I WILL CONTINUE TO TRY TO BE HELPFUL. EILTS

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